

Medina College

Fairlee Road, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 2DX

Inspection dates

12–13 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students' attainment has been well below average, and not all, especially higher attaining students, are making as much progress as they could.
- Teaching is not yet good, because teachers do not always plan activities that match students' needs and interests, or give them enough information about what they need to do to improve their work.
- Students do not always behave well in lessons, and their attendance has been well below the national average.
- The sixth form requires improvement because teaching is not yet consistently good enough to ensure that students achieve well.
- The actions school leaders have taken to improve students' achievement and behaviour, and the quality of teaching, have not had sufficient time to result in them being good.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have accurately identified the school's weaknesses, and have acted swiftly and effectively to address them. As a result, teaching is improving rapidly, students are making better progress and their attendance is rising.
- Governors know the school well, and are helping the school to improve by supporting school leaders and holding them rigorously to account.
- The curriculum, including in the sixth form, is well matched to students' interests and abilities and provides them with a good range of experiences.
- The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 43 lessons taught by 43 teachers, five of them together with school leaders. They also looked at students' written work, listened to students read, made shorter visits to a number of other lessons, and attended two assemblies.
- Inspectors held discussions with groups of, and individual, students; three members including the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Governing Body; members of staff; and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on students' attainment and progress and attendance. They examined safeguarding procedures and records of the school's own lesson observations, and scrutinised self-evaluation and planning documents.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, inspectors took account of 88 responses to the online survey (Parent View), which were submitted before and during the inspection, as well as a letter and three emails from parents, and 104 questionnaires completed by members of the teaching and support staff.

Inspection team

Robin Gaff, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Vic Chaffey	Additional Inspector
Roger Fenwick	Additional Inspector
Andrew Lyons	Additional Inspector
Sylvie Trevena	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a much larger than average sized secondary school.
- Most students are of White British heritage.
- Just over one in eight students is supported through school action, which is in line with the national average. About one in ten students is supported at school action plus or has a statement of special educational needs. This proportion is above the national average.
- An above-average proportion of students, about one in three, are eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding provided for children in local authority care, children of service families and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals. There are no children from service families currently on the school's roll.
- About one in three Year 7 students is eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium.
- The school has not met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Medina College opened as a Trust School in September 2011 following the reorganisation of schools on the Isle of Wight. When its predecessor school, Medina High School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory overall.
- The school is part of a hard federation with Carisbrooke College, with which it shares a governing body and a joint sixth form.
- The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 2011.
- A small number of students follow courses provided by other educational institutions, including the local college of further education.
- The school gained a Parent Partnership Award in 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to raise the achievement and attainment of all groups of students, including in the sixth form and for higher attaining students by:
 - ensuring teachers provide activities in lessons which are pitched at the right level and match students' interests and abilities
 - making sure teachers use questioning effectively to clarify and develop students' knowledge and understanding
 - providing sufficiently detailed comments in teachers' marking of students' work, so that all students understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Improve students' behaviour in lessons by ensuring that all staff consistently apply the school's policies.
- Raise the level of students' attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average, by ensuring that students, and their parents, fully understand the links between good attendance and good achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students join the school with levels of attainment which are well below the national average.
- The proportion of students who gained five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C in 2012 was also well below average, as was the proportion gaining A* and A grades. The results indicated that students had not made good progress from their starting points, and also that boys had made much less progress than girls.
- The attainment of both groups of students who were eligible for the pupil premium, as indicated by their performance at GCSE, was below that of other students in the school and of all students nationally. In English, grades gained by these students were just over half a grade lower than those of all other students in the school, and just under one grade lower than those achieved by all students nationally. In mathematics, there was a gap of just over half a grade with other students in the school, and of just over one grade with all students nationally.
- In the sixth form, students' performance in A- and AS-level examinations, especially in terms of the proportion gaining the higher grades, showed that they had not made as much progress as they could have done. There were considerable variations between results in different subjects.
- In some lessons, especially in Years 7 to 11, students' progress is limited because teachers do not give them work that stretches and challenges them, or because the pace of activities is too slow.
- The school's own reliable information about the standards being reached by current students throughout the school, including those in Year 11, indicates that they are rising rapidly because leaders have improved the quality of teaching. They have also identified those students who were especially at risk of underachieving, and have ensured that they are now receiving the support they need, including the provision of after-school and Saturday morning classes.
- A small number of students have been entered early for GCSE in mathematics. This has not prevented the most able students from gaining higher grades than they should have done.
- The school is succeeding in rapidly closing gaps in attainment, including between boys and girls, and also between students who qualify for pupil premium support and other students in this and other schools. These students are now making much better progress because the school is using the additional money well to provide them with extra teaching and support in reading, writing and mathematics. This is also the case for students who qualify for the Year 7 catch-up premium.
- The progress made by disabled students and those with special educational needs is also improving rapidly because of the additional support they are receiving from teachers and teaching assistants, including specialist staff, in small group and one-to-one sessions.
- Students who attend classes at other educational institutions make good progress. This is because they follow courses to which they are well suited, and the school checks carefully on how well they are doing.
- Students are now making good progress in reading because of the school's successful focus on this area. Most read fluently and accurately, and are keen to recommend to others the books they have read.
- In the best lessons, students make outstanding progress. This was the case in a drama lesson when Year 11 students thoroughly enjoyed and learned a great deal from performing and assessing each other's performances.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There are examples of good and outstanding practice in the school, including in the sixth form. However, the quality of teaching is too inconsistent to result in good learning and progress for students in all year groups.

- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what students are capable of learning. They do not consistently plan a sufficient range of activities, or adapt tasks, including during the course of lessons, so that students with different levels of ability can make good progress.
- Teachers' use of questioning during lessons is inconsistent. They do not always check that students understand the tasks they have been asked to complete, or ask questions which enable students to reflect on what they have learned and to extend their knowledge of the topics they are studying.
- Not all teachers are as yet following the school marking policy closely enough. They mark students' work regularly, but do not consistently give them specific enough advice about how to improve the quality of their work.
- Most teachers establish good working relationships with their students and establish a positive environment for learning.
- In the best lessons, teachers ensure that activities proceed at a fast and challenging pace, adapt them so that they correspond to the needs of all the students and reshape them in the light of response to tasks and of the extent of their progress. They give students plenty of opportunities to learn by assessing their own and others' work, and encourage students to explain and to justify their answers to questions.
- Teaching in mathematics is increasingly a strength of the school. For example, in an outstanding Year 9 lesson, the teacher regularly checked students' learning and encouraged them to add to and develop one another's answers. She made sure that all the students maintained their interest and their work-rate throughout the lesson by providing them with a range of activities that were well adapted to their abilities and interests.
- Teachers make good use of teaching assistants to ensure that disabled students and those with special educational needs are fully included in lesson activities and make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Students do not always behave well in lessons, and not all show positive attitudes to learning.
- On occasions, students become bored with and disengaged from lesson activities, and some of their behaviour presents a barrier to their own learning and that of others. Students say that not all teachers apply the school's policies with regard to the use of rewards and punishments in the same way.
- The proportion of students who have to be excluded from school is above the national average.
- Attendance is below the national average and the proportion of persistent absentees has been above average.
- Students and members of staff say that students' behaviour in class and around the school has improved a great deal since the appointment of the current headteacher. The number of exclusions has fallen considerably over the last year, and attendance, although still below average, has risen.
- Students say that they are not unduly concerned about bullying, because when it does occur, the school deals with it firmly and promptly. They know about different types of bullying, such as prejudice-based and cyber bullying. Racist behaviour is increasingly rare.
- Students in the sixth form behave well. They listen respectfully to their teachers and to one another's contributions in class and are keen to participate in discussion. They do not always work as urgently as they could in lessons.
- The behaviour and safety of students who follow courses at other educational institutions is good.
- A large majority of those parents who expressed an opinion in response to the Parent View survey agreed that the school makes sure that its students are well behaved, and that it deals effectively with bullying.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, ably supported by his senior team, has acted swiftly to address the issues which confronted the school when it opened.
- The school has not received good support from the local authority in making the transition to its current status. For example, a number of the teachers who transferred from the former middle schools reported that they had not received any training to help them to prepare for their new role.
- Senior staff have ensured that all teachers have received good training and support, so that they are now teaching more effectively. The school has commissioned an outside agency which is assisting leaders well, both in ensuring that all staff have a good understanding of students' performance, and in improving the quality of teaching.
- School leaders have an accurate view of the standards that students are reaching and of the quality of teaching. They are passionately committed to improving students' achievement, and have put in place systems which are already beginning to bring about substantial improvement.
- Leaders' success in narrowing gaps between the achievement of different groups, and the school's good provision for disabled students and those who have special educational needs demonstrate its effectiveness in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.
- Leaders manage the staff's performance well. They regularly observe lessons and scrutinise students' work, and have taken swift and robust action to reduce substantially the amount of weaker teaching. They are not in the least complacent, however, and fully recognise that, although teaching is improving rapidly, it is not yet consistently good.
- These factors provide convincing evidence of leaders' capacity to improve the school still further.
- The curriculum, including in the sixth form, provides students with a good range of courses and additional activities. The school has adapted it successfully to ensure that it caters well for disabled students and those with special educational needs, for example, by ensuring that they receive good support in small-group sessions with teachers and teaching assistants.
- The federation is enabling sixth form students to choose from a wider range of courses than was previously the case. This provision has not, however, had time to have a positive impact on their achievement. The school works well with other educational partners, including the local college, to ensure that students who will benefit from them can follow work-related courses, such as motor vehicle maintenance.
- The school offers a wide range of additional opportunities and enrichment events, some of them linked to its former specialism in performing arts. Many students enjoy taking part in theatrical events and musical performances, some of them organised together with the school's partners in the Trust. Students also have good opportunities to learn about the different cultures represented in the United Kingdom and the wider world. These factors contribute well to the school's effective promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders have worked hard and successfully to involve parents in the life of the school and their children's education, and most agree that it provides them with valuable information about their children's progress. Leaders have not been able to ensure that all parents and students appreciate sufficiently the link between good attendance at school and good achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good understanding of the standards reached by students and of how the school's performance compares with that of others. They are fully aware of how pupil premium money is being used to improve the achievement of eligible students. Governors know how good teaching is, and rigorously hold school leaders to account for improving its quality. They understand how leaders check teachers' performance in the classroom, and how they make sure that any pay increases result from successful practice. The governing body includes a good range of skills, and members regularly update them by undertaking relevant training. Governors make sure that the school's finances are on a secure footing. They ensure

that the school fully meets government requirements for safeguarding pupils.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	136010
Local authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	400264

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1511
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terence Hart
Headteacher	Nathan Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01983 526523
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